

Psychotropic medications affect a person’s behavior, mood, thoughts, or perception. There are different types of psychotropic medications.¹

Psychotropic Medication	Description	Examples	Common Side Effects	Black Box Warning(s)
<u>Antidepressants</u>	Antidepressants are used to treat many conditions, such as depression, anxiety, and insomnia. There are different types of antidepressants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Duloxetine (Cymbalta®) ➤ Sertraline (Zoloft®) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Headache ➤ Sexual dysfunction ➤ Upset stomach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Suicidal thoughts and behaviors
<u>Antipsychotics</u>	Antipsychotics are used to treat conditions including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depressive disorder.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Aripiprazole (Abilify®) ➤ Risperidone (Risperdal®) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Drowsiness ➤ Restlessness ➤ Weight gain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased mortality in elderly patients with dementia-related psychosis ➤ Suicidal thoughts and behaviors
<u>Anxiolytics</u>	Anxiolytics, or antianxiety medications, manage symptoms of anxiety, panic attacks, and extreme fear and worry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Buspirone (BuSpar®) ➤ Clonazepam (Klonopin®) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dizziness ➤ Drowsiness ➤ Dry mouth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Risks from concomitant use with opioids ➤ Abuse, misuse, and addiction ➤ Dependence and withdrawal reactions
<u>Mood Stabilizers</u>	Mood stabilizers are often used to treat bipolar disorder.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Carbamazepine (Tegretol®) ➤ Lithium (Lithobid®) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fatigue ➤ Nausea ➤ Weight gain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Aplastic anemia and agranulocytosis ➤ Fetal risk ➤ Hepatotoxicity ➤ Lithium toxicity ➤ Pancreatitis ➤ Patients with mitochondrial disease ➤ Serious dermatologic reactions and HLA-B*1502 allele ➤ Serious skin reactions
<u>Stimulants</u>	Stimulants may be used to treat attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dextroamphetamine-amphetamine (Adderall®) ➤ Methylphenidate (Concerta®, Ritalin®) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Decreased sleep ➤ Loss of appetite ➤ Weight loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Abuse, misuse, and addiction

Clients may have to get lab work done if they are on certain medications, such as antipsychotics or mood stabilizers. They may measure the drug levels or other lab values to ensure the medication is helping and safe for the client.

¹ This is not a comprehensive list of medications, their uses, or side effects/warnings.

Frequently Asked Questions

What can my clients expect from taking psychotropic medications?

- ➔ It may take a few days to several weeks for a person to feel the full effects of their medication. Encourage your client to consistently take their medication as prescribed by their doctor. Encourage your client to talk to their doctor if they feel that their medication is not working.
- ➔ Let your client and their family/caregivers know that these medications help manage the symptoms of their condition and do not change who they are as a person.
- ➔ All medications have the potential to cause side effects. This also depends on the person and the specific medication. Encourage your client to talk to their doctor about any changes that they experience. Let your client know that there may be ways to manage those side effects.
- ➔ Your client may want to stop taking their medication, especially if they are feeling better or if they are experiencing side effects. Let your client know that discontinuing medications suddenly may cause their symptoms to worsen, as well as causing uncomfortable side effects. Encourage them to talk to their doctor before making any changes.

How can I help my clients remember to take their medications?

- ➔ Motivational interviewing techniques can be used to explore your client's challenges to taking medications and elicit your client's motivation for change. For example, asking open-ended questions allows clients to tell their stories and you to understand their point of view ("Why are you concerned about your medication?"). Affirmations recognize clients' strengths, past successes, and efforts and promote self-efficacy ("You took a big step in taking your medications on time today.").
- ➔ Tools are available to help you identify challenges that your client may be experiencing with taking their medications, like the [Medication Adherence Rating Scale \(MARS\) Calculator](#).
 - » The MARS Calculator is a 10-question tool that asks clients about their attitudes towards medications ("Medication makes me feel tired and sluggish.") and medication-taking behavior ("Do you ever forget to take your medicine?") within the past week.
 - » The score ranges from 0 to 10. A higher score indicates better adherence.
- ➔ Help your client maintain a list of their medications. CBH has a [fillable wallet card](#) that can be printed and folded (The wallet card is also available [in Spanish](#)).
- ➔ Help your client set up alarms and reminders for when it is time to take their medications and when it is time for them to get refills. Apps like [Medisafe](#) may be helpful.
- ➔ Use a pill box to organize medications that come as tablets or capsules.
- ➔ Encourage family members and caregivers to be involved in your client's care when available.

How do I know if my clients' medications are covered by their insurance?

Pennsylvania Medicaid has a statewide [formulary/preferred drug list \(PDL\)](#) that Medicaid insurance companies in Pennsylvania must follow.

Preferred medications on the PDL are generally covered. However, some may have restrictions, like quantity limits.

Non-preferred medications may be covered if your client's doctor submits paperwork to show that your client needs the medication, also referred to as prior authorization, which is subject to the [Pennsylvania Statewide PDL Prior Authorization Guidelines](#). For example, your client's doctor may have to show that a preferred medication has not worked or that they cannot tolerate it.

The CBH Pharmacy Team developed a [PDL navigation video](#) for assistance (*Passcode: =LA5TE3\$*).

My client is having trouble finding an outpatient doctor and getting an appointment. What can we do?

Visit the [CBH Provider Directory](#) to search for a provider near you. The CBH Member Services Hotline (888-545-2600, TTY: 888-436-7482) can also help with finding and scheduling appointments.

Additional Information, Tools, and Resources

Please share these member-friendly educational resources with your clients and their families/caregivers.

[CBH Website: Pharmacy Education and Resources for Members](#)

Includes medication guides, tip sheets, and other valuable tools and resources to get informed about and properly use medications you may be prescribed



SCAN ME!

[National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\) Mental Health Medication Information](#)

For questions or support, please contact cbh.pharmacyinitatives@phila.gov.